



## MINUTES

### BOARD OF EQUAL RIGHTS COMMISSIONERS

September 21, 2016 at 2:30 P.M. in City Hall, Rm. 301-B

#### **Present:**

Aldira Aldape  
Marquette Baylor  
Mayhoua Moua  
Chez Ordonez, Co-Chair  
Dana Kraemer, Dept. of Administration  
Steven Mahan, Community Development Grants Admin.  
Sharon Robinson, Dept. of Administration

#### **Absent:**

Jeffery Roman, Chair

#### **Guests/Members of the public present:**

Ben Roovers, City Attorney's Office  
Patricia Ruiz-Cantu, Dept. of Administration  
Tony Snell, PrideFest

The meeting was called to order at 2:30 p.m. by Commissioner Ordonez, who also noted that a quorum was present.

#### ***1. Approval of minutes from July 20, 2016 meeting***

Commissioner Ordonez moved approval of the minutes; approved unanimously.

#### ***2. Approval of minutes from August 17, 2016 meeting***

Commissioner Ordonez moved approval of the minutes; approved unanimously.

#### ***3. Update on Resource Guide for Immigrants and Refugees***

Ms. Robinson stated that the Department of Employee Relations (former overseer of the ERC) is unable to locate said guide and asked that Commissioners search their old emails for a possible draft electronic version. It was Ms. Montegudo's opinion that the ERC should start all over with drafting this guide because the previous version was not appropriate for the population the ERC is seeking to serve. Ms. Robinson stated that this would be an excellent project for the new Equal Rights Specialist to work on, along with other marketing materials. Commissioner Ordonez concurred with this assessment and stated that Commissioner Roman should have the opportunity to weigh in on this before any movable action is taken. Commissioner Aldape

stated that the ERC's community outreach subcommittee should work on this with the new Equal Rights Specialist and with the hope that they have a full ERC within the next few months. Ms. Robinson recommended that the Community Outreach Manager, Patricia Ruiz-Cantu, also be engaged for this project. Commissioner Aldape agreed that Ms. Ruiz-Cantu would be a good addition to this project. Commissioner Baylor reminded everyone to check their emails for this document and Ms. Robinson said she will check with Kristin Urban in the Department of Employee Relations and inquire if she might have a copy of the draft document. Commissioner Aldape moved to refer this matter to the community outreach subcommittee; Commissioner Moua seconded; motion passed. The Resource Guide for Immigrants and Refugees is so referred, with Commissioners Baylor, Ordonez, and Moua as well as Patricia Ruiz-Cantu to work on it.

#### ***4. Update on Equal Rights Specialist position***

Ms. Robinson stated that an offer has been made to a candidate and she is in the hiring process. Ms. Robinson asked Commissioners Ordonez and Aldape to give an overview of the hiring process since they were both on the hiring panel. Both Commissioners stated they were appreciative of the opportunity to be involved and agreed that there was one particularly-qualified candidate. The process was fair, there was a good scope of candidates, and everything went very well. As soon as the candidate has given her current employer notice, Ms. Robinson will notify the Commissioners and send the candidate's resume to them. Commissioner Ordonez thought it would be nice to meet her before the next ERC meeting, however with a target start date only a week before the next ERC meeting, it may not be possible. After the candidate is in place on October 11<sup>th</sup>, Ms. Robinson will bring together the ERC Chair, Co-Chair, and DER reps to train her. Commissioner Ordonez stated that the City of Milwaukee is to be congratulated for dedicating a staff member to the ERC and thinks it is a good move.

#### ***5. Update on ERC budget***

Ms. Robinson stated that the Mayor will introduce his 2017 budget on September 26<sup>th</sup>. The ERC has been given a budget of \$5,000. Ms. Robinson stated that tax levy dollars cannot be used for the Commissioners' professional development. Commissioner Ordonez requested that the City provide guidelines/rules for how the ERC is allowed to use these dollars. Ms. Robinson stated that any activity that fosters inclusion is something that would be approved.

#### ***6. Office of African American Affairs***

Ms. Robinson stated that Alderman Rainey introduced legislation establishing a City Office of African American Affairs (OAAA) and it will be housed within the City Clerk's Office. The Department of Administration (DOA) will be working closely with the Common Council in this endeavor since many of DOA's initiatives are related to inclusion. Ms. Robinson will circulate the legislation to ERC members after the meeting. There is a provision in the legislation that the OAAA has to promote equal opportunities. Commissioner Aldape stated that it's sad to be

known as coming from such a segregated city as Milwaukee. She expressed her concern that if we start to identify offices for a particular group, that we are segregating ourselves at a city level. Commissioner Baylor stated that the matter is already approved/ passed and will be staffed. She hopes that the ERC staffer can work closely with the OAAA staffer. Ms. Robinson stated that if the ERC Commissioners wanted to share their ideas, thoughts, or concerns with any of the alderpersons, they should request to meet with them. Ms. Robinson stated that there has been a lot of internal discussion on how the OAAA, the ERC, and the County's OAAA can work together to maximize resources so we don't duplicate efforts or undercut each other on possible grant funding opportunities. Commissioner Baylor asked about Alderman Wade's previous proposal for an Office of Multicultural Affairs and how it morphed into the Office of African American Affairs. Commissioner Aldape stated that when you have multiple cultures competing against each for budget dollars and other services, it can cause problems between those groups. Commissioner Ordonez asked how much of the ERC's role and Chapter 109 as far as promoting diversity and equal rights will cross over into the OAAA's and thinks they should sit down together, along with the City Attorney's Office, and take a look at the layover. Commissioner Moua stated she wants to make sure that the ERC doesn't add on to the segregation that already exists within the city and that as an Asian representative, she can say that Asians have been forgotten in the past and sometimes already feel invisible to the city. However, she has seen a lot of efforts to be inclusive of multiple cultures but wonders if the OAAA is going to bring the groups closer or further the gap between them. Ms. Robinson thought it would be impactful for the ERC to request a meeting with Ald. Rainey or write him a letter and share their concerns. Commissioner Ordonez suggested inviting Ald. Rainey to the next ERC meeting. Ms. Robinson thought it would be appropriate for the ERC Chair or Co-Chair to extend that invitation and once Commissioner Roman or Ordonez lets her know the letter is ready, she will give Ald. Rainey a heads-up that an invitation is forthcoming for the Oct. 19<sup>th</sup> meeting. Commissioner Baylor is interested in finding out how oversight of the OAAA moved from DOA to the Common Council since so many of DOA's initiatives are related to inclusion. Ms. Robinson will ask the Legislative Reference Bureau if they did a formal analysis of other OAAAs around the country; if said report exists she will send it along to the ERC Commissioners. Commissioner Aldape motioned to send a letter of invitation to Ald. Rainey to attend the Oct. 19<sup>th</sup> ERC meeting; Commissioner Moua seconded; motion passed.

### ***7. Next meeting is October 19, 2016***

Commissioner Ordonez asked for agenda items. Commissioner Aldape motioned to add the introduction of the new Equal Rights Specialist; Commissioner Moua seconded; motion passed.

### ***8. Adjourn***

Commissioner Ordonez asked for any last comments. Ms. Robinson stated that the Black Male Achievement Advisory Council's Boys & Men of Color Week is coming up and will forward a flyer to the ERC. Mr. Snell stated that October 11<sup>th</sup> is National Coming Out Day for the LGBTQ community. This event is taking place in Walker's Point (different neighborhood each year) at

the S. Second Street building, and will incorporate the No Hate campaign. There will be food, beverage, and vendors. Mr. Snell will send the flyer to Ms. Kraemer and she will forward it to the Commissioners. Ms. Robinson stated she will also forward that flyer to the organizing team of Boys & Men of Color Week, since they mentioned wanting to make a concerted effort to reach out to the LBGT community. Mr. Mahan is eager to get the new ERC staffer onboard. Due to where her work station is located, she will be acclimated quickly to what is going on, including housing and economic development efforts and everything that the city funds. Commissioner Aldape motioned to adjourn the meeting; Commissioner Moua seconded; motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 3:41 p.m.

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